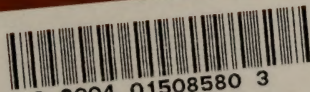


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Canadian Nationalism and the War



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Here will be found an "Interview" from Mr. HENRI BOURASSA to the Toronto Star representative, Mr. ARTHUR HAWKES, with a short letter of general approval from Mr. BOURASSA; also Capt. TALBOT PAPINEAU's "Open Letter" to Mr. BOURASSA, and the latter's reply, with a note of explanation from Mr. ANDREW MCMASTER, K.C.

They may prove of interest to those who wish to learn more of the Nationalist views on the War and the problems of Imperial Partnership.

I

***Mr. Bourassa's Views on the Participation of Canada
in the war—The Past and the Future—
Imperialism and Nationalism***

(This Interview was written by Mr. ARTHUR HAWKES for the Toronto Star, and appeared in that paper, in two parts, on July 14 and 15, 1916. The reader is requested to keep in mind that the Star interview does not purport either to express the views of that journal and its representative, or to reproduce the language used by Mr. Bourassa. It merely gives out the impressions derived by Mr. Hawkes from his conversation with Mr. Bourassa.)

"Pay no attention to Bourassa. Advertising is what he wants. Say nothing about him, and he'll peter out." Advices like these are given by men of wide experience who offer short-cuts to public policy and patent medicine cures for democratic ills. If it is true that the trouble in Quebec is Bourassa-made, and that it menaces the future happiness of Canada, you can no more divorce the effect from the cause than you can dissociate the ear from the blade.

You don't extinguish a man by calling him a firebrand. You can't put out a blaze by turning your back upon it. One who has been in public life for twenty years—Mr. Bourassa entered Parliament in 1896—who is the most persistent, most effective propagandist among two and a half millions of people, whose words are eagerly read by priests who live 3,000 miles away from him, and of whom it is said that 5,000 clergy in Quebec follow him as their flocks are wont to follow Laurier, is a factor to be reckoned with.

GOVERNMENT FEARS BOURASSA

The Government, which admits it is non-plussed about Quebec's attitude to the war, is afraid of Bourassa. The sooner the nation has a true idea of what the fear is, and why, the sooner can it do justice to itself and to the country for which it asks its sons to die. If what Bourassa says to his following is foolish, let us know it, for our comfort's sake. If it is subtle and difficult to meet, let us face subtlety and difficulty as openly as we expect our boys to face machine guns and curtains of fire. The ostrich is not a patriot. Bourassa is not a fool—at least nobody who has talked three hours with him would say the time was wasted on a negligible quantity.

HIS KNOWLEDGE OF CANADA

Bourassa discusses Canadian affairs with a wealth of knowledge which is unusual in the Parliament of Canada. He has a marvelous memory for his reading of ancient and modern history. His contact with inter-Imperial quantities is probably wider than that of any member of the Cabinet, except the Prime Minister. Take two examples which appeared casually in talk about this, that, and the other: Three years ago he read an article in the *Canadian Courier* on General Hertzog, who had recently left General Botha's Government in South Africa. It was by a writer whom he never met till yesterday. Recalling it, he said he has had correspondence with Hertzog, whose program for South Africa he thinks is a little hazy. Hertzog leads a solid Nationalist representation from the Orange River Colony in the South African Parliament.

The question of Canada's participation in the war was mentioned, Bourassa referred to conversations in Paris four years ago with French statesmen about the preparations for the war with Germany which they believed to be inevitable. They discussed what he called England's "diffidence" about her share in the approaching conflict. They thought she was not willing to go as far as they thought the circumstances required, Bourassa pointed out to them that England's world-wide interests were so magnitudinous that she could not take the same view of meeting the menace which France did, whose Empire beyond the seas was not comparable to hers.

I mention this to show that Bourassa has contacted more intimately with international politics than most of our publicists have. There are other French-Canadians whose facility in the tongue of diplomacy gave them entry to international circles. The other day one of them told of interchanges in Berlin and Vienna years before the war, which made one wonder how it is we have not learned to utilise the political experience which is at our disposal—why we have allowed machine politicians of the sordid type so largely to initiate our progress towards nationhood.

BRAINS AND COURAGE

Bourassa would be at home discussing large affairs in any European chancellery. When he spoke to the Toronto Canadian Club the president described him as a great Canadian. A man does not become a pigmy merely because he takes an unpopular view and has the nerve to proclaim it. You may dislike his premises and contest his conclusions, but you needn't refuse to recognise his brains and his courage. Olive Schreiner, the most famous woman Africa has produced since Cleopatra, was a vehement opponent of Cecil Rhodes. To see her powers of dissection and condemnation in operation is to marvel at some men's ideas about the feminine intellect. When she had exercised them upon the man whose last will and testament was the most striking monument to the genius of W. T. Stead, her hearer protested that Rhodes was really

a big man. "Of course he is," she swiftly retorted. "He's a very great man. That is why he is so dangerous."

Bourassa isn't Rhodes, but his intellectual range is ever so much wider than Rhodes' was, and he has no millions to make it effective. When he returns to Parliament at the next general election his opponents will be more glad to listen to him than to answer him. He will know what he has been thinking about. Some of them will begin to realise that ideas and words may blend.

HE FORESAW THE WAR

Because the Government is afraid to touch Bourassa's attitude towards the political aspect of our war is good enough reason for other people to find out what it is. Before 1911 he believed a great European war was coming. He had been in Paris and he knew some of the things which were understood in the Champs Elysées. He preached against Canadian participation in Imperial wars partly because the veil had been lifted a little for him. It is no use slang-whanging him for being consistent, merely because his consistency is frightfully discommoding to those who welcomed his support in 1911.

Bourassa doesn't see why he should be called a traitor because he says now what he has never ceased to say for at least sixteen years. He puts up an ingenious argument which connects with the expression of a well known Canadian statesman that he would have been against Canada joining in a war if Britain had decided to fight with Russia and France about the ultimatum to Serbia.

BOURASSA'S ARGUMENT

"Suppose," says Bourassa, "that when the life of Serbia was threatened by Austria, and France saw that if Germany came in the integrity of Belgium would be jeopardised — would France have been justified in saying to Belgium: "Come on now and fight in Serbia, to save her, because if we don't Belgium will be overrun by Germany? The only thing for Belgium to do was to be ready to defend her own soil."

Bourassa draws a partial parallel between the position of Belgium in such circumstances and the position of Canada in rushing to Flanders as a means of defending herself. To one who is British first and Canadian afterwards, his suggestion is peculiarly repellent; but he makes it only to introduce his exposition of the Canadian situation as he sees it, apart from what he calls the most worthily sentimental attitude of the English-speaking sections of Canada. I think what follows fairly represents his position.

BEING BRITISH BY CONQUEST

Primarily, you must not expect Bourassa to take the same ground as a man of British origin recently come to Canada. There is a vast difference between being British by blood and British by conquest and consti-

tutional experience. There is also a great difference between the British-Canadian of the first generation and his neighbour of the fifth generation. Delve into the regimental lists and you will see. Look around and you will discover this difference between Canada and the United States — that the Republic is entirely assimilative, and Canada, as regards the millions of French, is co-operative. The bilingual Parliament is the anchorage of the distinctive quality of the French contribution to an evolving Canadian nationality. The French in Canada are the most essentially North American people in the Confederation. Their root is deepest and longest in the soil. All their problems are here. They cannot regard European considerations as the British-born do. Canada first, last, and all the time is their gospel. They are not interested in India. The management of the Suez Canal is not their concern. What are the Falkland Islands and the Gold Coast to Saskatchewan? The effect of the war on Canada is the fundamental of their participation in it.

WHAT BOURASSA THINKS OF THE WAR

It is a presentable, but not obligatory, argument that the defence of Canada is being essentially accomplished in Flanders. The Government's position being what it was, we could not entirely keep out of the war, but the quality and method of that participation are matters of importance to the Canadian people, which it is their duty to canvass. The war will put Canada back twenty-five years and reduce her capacity to solve these vital New World problems which are hers, and not Britain's, to solve. It is no credit to us to say that we are a nation in the war if we act like the barbarians we said we would never be.

CANADA'S POSITION

In the events that preceded the war we had no more to say than Robinson Crusoe. We have no more say as to the control of our troops in the theatre of war than the Senegalese have whom France has brought to her aid. Long before the war, Borden and Doherty, in Parliament, laid down the principle that liability to share in Imperial defence involved direct responsibility for Imperial policy. The answer to that was that London could not share responsibility for Imperial policy. The effort was made at succeeding Imperial conferences to induce the Dominions to obligate themselves for Imperial wars without a voice in deciding what, where, and when those wars should be.

The event proved that Downing Street had its way. Canada has supinely abdicated all the true functions of a nation at war—asking no questions, asserting no claim to belligerent identity, conducting herself like an ancient vassal—a mere puppet among the nations, accepting, apparently with grateful servility, the promise of being “consulted” about her own destiny, and never dreaming of herself being represented at the table on which her fate may be written. And yet the Prime Minister says Canada is one of the great nations in the war!

CEDE CANADA TO GERMANY?

We fight in Flanders because, if Britain loses, Canada may be ceded to Germany. Again the question of nationality lifts its head. Since when was it the practice of countries which put hundreds of thousands of men in the field to be disposed of in this fashion? The Congress of Vienna, after the Napoleonic wars, did not do what it is suggested Canada should stand for if the Flanders issue should be unfavourable. We certainly owe it to ourselves to fight against becoming the slaves of Germany. Some say the whole of that fight must be made in Flanders. Not so. The true vitality of that warfare must be in Canada—as to which the Government is foolish and afraid, and is absolutely dumb towards the people whose servant it is—and the people answer dumbness in kind.

Before the war, England decided how far she would be prepared to go in a continental conflict—her expeditionary force was to be 160,000 men. The program was changed by the war, but the governing factor of interest did not change. The proof? Last year, when Lloyd George was Chancellor of the Exchequer, he showed how England's contributions to the cause might be, not chiefly men, but finances, freedom of the seas. Lately Winston Churchill in Parliament took the Government figures as to enlistment and found 1,700,000 men not accounted for at the front. Where were they? Mr. Asquith admitted that a great reserve was being held against a possible invasion of the British Isles. If Canada were to imitate that policy we would keep here most of our troops to withstand a possible German attack.

IN THE SPIRIT OF A VASSAL

But the Government has done nothing adequately to co-ordinate our resources for the work we have undertaken. It has acted in the spirit of a vassal, and not after the manner of a nation. It has put us in a contemptible position before the world. When Australia buys ships so as not to be entirely at the disposal of Downing Street in maritime commerce, and Canada is asked why she does not do likewise, the answer in the mouth of our Trade Minister is that Canada proposes to do nothing! No people who raised such an army as we have levied ever behaved so little like a nation as we have. In valour our men have been magnificent. In statesmanship we have been pitiable.

And the future? Imperial conferences are proposed to rearrange the future government of the Empire. The Imperial partnership that was refused before the war is now, apparently, to be proffered. Lionel Curtis' book on "The Problem of the Commonwealth" deals with the subject most admirably. It is plain we cannot revert to the old condition. What then is the future to be?

THE FUTURE OF CANADA

Bourassa agrees that the future for Canada ought to be Imperial partnership or independence—with more than one chance of being annexation to the United States. He stands for independence and, short of it, for Imperial partnership. He discusses both with equal freedom. "I have nothing to conceal", is the profession of his frankness, which is not all pure cussedness. An orator like Bourassa is not fond of unpopularity and obloquy. When he says that he has been scalded by Ontario journalists he shows more, perhaps, of his temper than he supposes. He may have some of Stead's love of shocking the unco' proper—he likes to make your flesh creep now and then. His own feeling towards the British Empire in distress is that of the surgeon in the operating theatre rather than that of the lover at the bedside of the stricken fair.

It boots nothing to gnash your teeth at that, for a point of view cannot always defeat nature. It works this way—when an orator exhorts us to fight for the Empire which our race has made, he appeals to all our British instincts and experience. But he cannot in the same breath appeal identically to a French man who is not full partaker of our racial pride. He cannot thrill to the story of the Cape of Good Hope, of the occupation of Australia, of the creation of New Zealand within living memory, of the achievement of Plassy, and the completeness of Omdurman. Indeed, he knows that in the surge of glory that comes upon his fellow-Canadians as the long swell of the Indian Ocean drenches the shore of East London and Port Natal, there are elements which dash against his racial consciousness. Even Sir John Willison would scarcely sing "Twas in Trafalgar Bay" to a Parisian crowd in l'Avenue de l'Opéra. In Place Jacques Cartier there is a Nelson monument, which, on the side facing the Montreal City Hall, has an inscription telling how the Incomparable Seaman destroyed the French fleet in 1805. It was not thought expedient to chisel the inscriptions in French.

THE CANADIAN FEELING

Excellent Imperialists, like Sir Rider Haggard, who habitually speak of Canada as if there were only mental Londoners within our gates; may suppose that 2,500,000 Canadians of French descent are an accident in the Confederation, just as they may feel like applying the standards of Australia, where the prevailing accent is of Piccadilly, to South Africa, where the Dutch who love South Africa first, vastly outnumber the English who habitually speak of the United Kingdom as "home". But the more Canada is thought of as an emulator of Britain the more distinctly Canadian will the French who listen to Bourassa insist on being. A Canadian who derives from the Clyde, and who delights to be photographed in Glaswegian kilts, can scarcely complain if the Canadian who derives from Jacques Cartier and Champlain likes to clothe his thoughts in the language of Normandy.

BOURASSA NOT ENGLISH

Bourassa is not English and does not want to be. He takes a somewhat similar view of his place in Canada as Captain Shawe Taylor, of excellent memory, took of the situation of Ireland in the United Kingdom and the Empire. Shawe Taylor was a Sligo landlord who changed his hostility to the Irish Nationalists to confidence because, as he told me when the Wyndham Land Act was brewing, he had discovered that Britain had for centuries erred in trying to make bad Englishmen out of good Irishmen.

Bourassa has an idea that Ontario wants to make bad Englishmen out of good Frenchmen, who are also good British citizens, and will contentedly remain so if they are left alone. He does not see where disloyalty to Canada comes in if he takes a view which even Lionel Curtis, from whom the *Toronto News* imbibes inspiration, admits to be thoroughly within the bounds of discussion. Mr. Curtis says we must choose between Imperial partnership or independence if the true dignity of self-government is to be achieved, and that the question will have to be decided one way or the other. Very good.

Now, if there are two choices before 8,000,000 people who have proved their right to absolute freedom of decision by going into a war with a vast army which they were under no compulsion to raise, can it be said that only one decision is allowable to a loyal man? Mr. Curtis does not suggest that if Canada elects against Imperial partnership she will be treasonable. He, no doubt, agrees with Burke, that you cannot indict a nation. If you could not indict the Canadian people because by a vote of 2,000,000 to 1,000,000 they decided for independence, who would dream of indicting those who voted for independence if they happened to be the minority instead of the majority? The nation is its own jury. A juryman in a minority of one is perfectly loyal to the jury system.

By the same token if, the Round Table people being witnesses, it will be perfectly proper for Canadians, if they so desire, to declare for independence after the war, he cannot have been a criminal against Canada, who foresaw the propriety of independence before the war began. It is not a capital offence against patriotism to see a national possibility before your neighbour sees it.

Suppose the returning Canadian army should, in the main, feel that its position in Flanders, at the absolute disposal of commanders who proved their inability to appreciate the dominant factors of trench warfare until after 10,000 lives had been needlessly sacrificed, was not worthy of their country, and that in any future wars the complete, final responsibility for Canadian lives must remain in Canadian hands — will the army be called disloyal because it wants to be a national army as definitely as the Belgian army was and the Dutch army is?

WILL FIGHT FOR INDEPENDENCE

Having suggested questions like these for your rumination, Bourassa says that when the choice is put up to Canada, according to the logic of events which Mr. Curtis' excellent book invites us to face, he will be for Canadian independence, and he will fight for it.

WILL ACCEPT PARTNERSHIP

That is fair warning, but it promises stormy weather. But he will accept Imperial partnership, if that is the decision of the people of Canada, for it is very much to be preferred to the colonialism we now have. It would bring us sharply against the necessity for dealing with large affairs in a large way. It would quicken our pace away from littleness. It would lift us to a plane whence a far larger horizon than we now enjoy would be always within our view. It would school us in associations which a sudden independence would find us ill-prepared for. It would introduce us to controversies and difficulties which belong to statesmanship that is worth while. It would help Canada to attain the full stature of a man in the world.

PARTNERSHIP WILL BREAK EMPIRE

When Bourassa talks like that, he seems to think that perhaps the road to harmony is the Round Table way, and to suggest that the experiment of a common fund for Imperial defence, which means a common participation in any war which the majority of Imperial units might bring on, is well worth trying, because at least it offers the chance of a dazzling success. But he makes your flesh creep again and leaves it creeping. He expects that Imperial partnership will inevitably break up the British Empire sooner or later. And there you are. Imperial partnership would be far better than the present condition, and would have many advantages over independence. He would accept it. But, because he hopes it would not work permanently, he will fight against it, and apparently, would give no guarantee that he would regard it as his first duty to strive to make it a success.

BAFFLING AND BRILLIANT

So here is the most baffling, the most brilliant, the most intransigent, factor in Quebec, which it is useless to swear at Imperially. How far he has imposed his ideas on other people, and how far he is expressing one of those dynamics of nationality which from time to time set new political forces in array, are things upon which it would be foolish to express judgment. For such as are prone to dispose of such a man by ebullitions of anger which are as natural as they are uninformative, the position of Lloyd George in the Empire is a warning to look deeper than one's own resentment for a reading of the unhappy situation which has developed, and an injunction against making the characteristic blunder of the weak

man who mistakes his own contempt for an opponent for unconquerable strength.

Bourassa has made trouble. The Government has had neither the wit nor the courage to counteract his genius, which is brainier than theirs. He does not say all he thinks, but he impresses you as one who thinks all he says.

His admirers count on his becoming the undisputed champion of the French-Canadian people when the time has fully come. Twenty years ago a French-Canadian became Prime Minister, after a fight in which the Church battled against him. Bourassa, if he is not the Church, is the strongest ally the Church has. From that point of view, he has succeeded to part of the Sir John Macdonald inheritance — which is worth nothing as a commentary on the historical embarrassment which clings to the truth about the Borden-Bourassa alliance of five years ago. Sir Herbert Ames paid for the distribution of *Le Devoir* all over Quebec in 1911, and so helped to spread the written exhortation against any Canadian participation in Imperial wars. Circulations, like chickens, come home to roost.

Bourassa is some rooster.

* * *

A LETTER FROM Mr. BOURASSA

“The foregoing article and the one of this series which appeared in the *Star* yesterday were submitted to M. Bourassa by Mr. Hawkes. In returning them, M. Bourassa wrote as follows:—”

“Montreal, July 10, 1916.

.....
“On the whole, your sketch of my views is very fair. I have made a few slight corrections on some points which, evidently, I had not made clear enough. Of course, I would not bind myself by the strict interpretation you have given of all that I have said or merely intimated. This not being an interview, but the recital of the impressions you have gathered from our conversation, it would be impertinent on my part to undertake to raise objections on this or that point in form.

“May I observe, however, that I have not put my own opinions so insistingly under the guardship of the Round Table as you seem to indicate. That Mr. Custis’ book on the “Problem of the Commonwealth” is excellent, from the Imperialist point of view, I do indeed think. But I have not waited for the leadership of the Round Table to state that Canada must choose, in the near future, between independence or Imperial partnership. That was my view, as expressed in Parliament, as early as the days of the South African war. I thought that the evolution from colonial servitude to national independence could have been gradual, and the separation from England friendly

and acceptable to both countries. The participation of Canada in the present war precipitates the issue.

“One point I did not develop in our conversation is the motive of my desire for the disruption of the British Empire. It is not because it is British, but because it is Imperial. All Empires are hateful. They stand in the way of human liberty, and true progress, intellectual and moral. They serve nothing but brutal instincts and material objects. All that is good in British ideals, and there is much of it, would be better served by the free action of several independent British communities than by the common action of a monstrous Empire, built up by force and robbery, and kept together for no other purpose than allowing one race and one nation to dominate one-fifth of the human race. British nations have to choose between British ideals and British domination. I stand for ideals against domination. I may be hanged for it, in the name of British liberty, but that does not matter.

.....

“Yours truly,

“HENRI BOURASSA.”

II

An Open Letter from Capt. Talbot Papineau to Mr. Henri Bourassa

(A copy of this letter was sent to Mr. Bourassa by Mr. Andrew-R. McMaster, K.C., on the 18th of July, 1916. It was published, on the 28th of July, in most of Montreal, Quebec, Ottawa and Toronto papers, English and French).

In the Field.

France, March 21st. 1916.

To Monsieur Henri Bourassa,
Editor of Le Devoir,

Montreal.

My dear Cousin Henri,—

I was sorry before leaving Quebec in 1914 not to have had an opportunity of discussing with you the momentous issues which were raised in Canada by the outbreak of this war.

You and I have had some discussions in the past, and although we have not agreed upon all points, yet I am happy to think that our pleasant friendship, which indeed dates from the time of my birth, has hitherto continued uninjured by our differences of opinion. Nor would I be the first to make it otherwise, for however I may deplore the character of your views, I have always considered that you held them honestly and sincerely and that you were singularly free from purely selfish or personal ambitions.

Very possibly nothing that I could have said in August 1914 would have caused you to change your opinions, but I did hope that as events developed and as the great national opportunity of Canada became clearer to all her citizens, you would have been influenced to modify your views and to adopt a different attitude. In that hope I have been disappointed. Deeply involved as the honour and the very national existence of Canada has become, beautiful but terrible as her sacrifices have been, you and you alone of the leaders of Canadian thought appear to have remained unmoved, and your unhappy views unchanged.

Too occupied by immediate events in this country to formulate a protest or to frame a reasoned argument, I have nevertheless followed with intense feeling and deep regret the course of action which you have pursued. Consolation of course I have had in the fact that far from

sharing in your views, the vast majority of Canadians, and even many of those who had formerly agreed with you, were now strongly and bitterly opposed to you. With this fact in mind I would not take the time from my duties here to write you this letter did I not fear that the influence to which your talent, energy and sincerity of purpose formerly entitled you, might still be exercised upon a small minority of your fellow countrymen, and that your attitude might still be considered by some as representative of the race to which we belong.

Nor can I altogether abandon the hope—presumptuous no doubt but friendly and well-intentioned—that I may so express myself here as to give you a new outlook and a different purpose, and perhaps even win you to the support of a principle which has been proved to be dearer to many Canadians than life itself.

I shall not consider the grounds upon which you base your opposition to Canadian participation in this more than European—in this World War. Rather I wish to begin by pointing out some reasons why on the contrary your whole-hearted support might have been expected.

And the first reason is this. By the declaration of war by Great Britain upon Germany, Canada became “*ipso facto*” a belligerent, subject to invasion and conquest, her property at sea subject to capture, her coasts subject to bombardment or attack, her citizens in enemy territory subject to imprisonment or detention. This is not a matter of opinion—it is a matter of fact—a question of international law. No arguments of yours at least could have persuaded the Kaiser to the contrary. Whatever your views or theories may be as to future constitutional development of Canada, and in those views I believe I coincide to a large extent, the fact remains that at the time of the outbreak of war Canada was a possession of the British Empire, and as such as much involved in the war as any country in England, and from the German point of view and the point of view of International Law equally subject to all its pains and penalties. Indeed proof may no doubt be made that one of the very purposes of Germany’s aggression and German military preparedness was the ambition to secure a part if not the whole of the English possessions in North America.

That being so, surely it was idle and pernicious to continue an academic discussion as to whether the situation was a just one or not, as to whether Canada should or should not have had a voice in ante bellum English diplomacy or in the actual declaration of war. Such a discussion may very properly arise upon a successful conclusion of the war, but so long as national issues are being decided in Prussian fashion, that is, by an appeal to the Power of Might, the liberties of discussion which you enjoyed by virtue of British citizenship were necessarily curtailed and any resulting decisions utterly valueless. If ever there was a time for action and not for theories it was to be found in Canada upon the outbreak of war.

Let us presume for the sake of argument that your attitude had also been adopted by the Government and people of Canada and that we had declared our intention to abstain from active participation in the war until Canada herself was actually attacked. What would have resulted? One of two things. Either the Allies would have been defeated or they would not have been defeated. In the former case Canada would have been called upon either to surrender unconditionally to German domination or to have attempted a resistance against German arms.

You, I feel sure, would have preferred resistance, but as a proper corrective to such a preference I would prescribe a moderate dose of trench bombardment. I have known my own dogmas to be seriously disturbed in the midst of a German artillery concentration. I can assure you that the further you travel from Canada and the nearer you approach the great military power of Germany, the less do you value the unaided strength of Canada. By the time you are within fifteen yards of a German army and know yourself to be holding about one yard out of a line of five hundred miles or more, you are liable to be enquiring very anxiously about the presence and power of British and French forces. Your ideas about charging to Berlin or of ending the war would also have undergone some slight moderation.

No, my dear Cousin, I think you would shortly after the defeat of the Allies have been more worried over the mastery of the German consonants than you are even now over a conflict with the Ontario Anti-bi-linguists. Or I can imagine you an unhappy exile in Terra del Fuego eloquently comparing the wrongs of Quebec and Alsace.

But you will doubtless say we would have had the assistance of the Great American Republic! It is quite possible. I will admit that by the time the American fleet had been sunk and the principal buildings in New York destroyed the United States would have declared war upon Europe, but in the meantime Canada might very well have been paying tribute and learning to decline German verbs, probably the only thing German she *could* have declined.

I am, as you know, by descent even more American than I am French, and I am a sincere believer in the future of that magnificent Republic. I cannot forget that more than any other nation in the world's history — England not excepted — she has suffered war solely for the sake of some fine principle of nationality. In 1776 for the principle of national existence. In 1812 for the principle of the inviolability of American citizenship. In 1860 for the preservation of National unity and the suppression of slavery. In 1896 for the protection of her National pride and in sympathy for the wrongs of a neighbouring people.

Nor disappointed as I am at the present inactivity of the States will I ever waiver in my loyal belief that in time to come, perhaps less distant than we realise, her actions will correspond with the lofty expression of her national and international ideals.

I shall continue to anticipate the day when with a clear understand-

ing and a mutual trust we shall by virtue of our united strength and our common purposes be prepared to defend the right of humanity not only upon the American Continent but throughout the civilised world.

Nevertheless we are not dealing with what may occur in the future but with the actual fact of yesterday and to-day, and I would feign know if you still think that a power which without protest witnesses the ruthless spoliation of Belgium and Servia, and without effective action the murder of her own citizens, would have interfered to protect the property or the liberties of Canadians. Surely you must at least admit an element of doubt, and even if such interference had been attempted, have we not the admission of the Americans themselves that it could not have been successful against the great naval and military organisations of the Central Powers?

May I be permitted to conclude that had the Allies been defeated Canada must afterwards necessarily have suffered a similar fate.

But there was the other alternative, namely, that the Allies even without the assistance of Canada would *not* have been defeated. What then? Presumably French and English would still have been the official languages of Canada. You might still have edited untrammelled your version of Duty, and Colonel Lavergne might still, publicly and without the restraining fear of death or imprisonment, have spoken seditiously (I mean from the Prussian point of view of course). In fact Canada might still have retained her liberties and might with the same freedom from external influences have continued her progress to material and political strength.

But would you have been satisfied — you who have arrogated to yourself the high term of Nationalist? What of the Soul of Canada? Can a nation's pride or patriotism be built upon the blood and suffering of others or upon the wealth garnered from the coffers of those who in anguish and with blood-sweat are fighting the battles of freedom? If we accept our liberties, our national life, from the hands of the English soldiers, if without sacrifices of our own we profit by the sacrifices of the English citizens, can we hope to ever become a nation ourselves? How could we ever acquire that Soul or create that Pride without which a nation is a dead thing and doomed to speedy decay and disappearance.

If you were truly a Nationalist — if you loved our great country and without smallness longed to see her become the home of a good and united people — surely you would have recognised this as her moment of travail and tribulation. You would have felt that in the agony of her losses in Belgium and France, Canada was suffering the birth pains of her national life. There even more than in Canada herself, her citizens are being knit together into a new existence because when men stand side by side and endure a soldier's life and face together a soldier's death, they are united in bonds almost as strong as the closest of blood-ties.

There was the great opportunity for the true Nationalist! There was the great issue, the great sacrifice, which should have appealed equally

to all true citizens of Canada, and should have served to cement them with indissoluble strength — Canada was at war ! Canada was attacked ! What mattered then internal dissensions and questions of home importance? What mattered the why and wherefore of the war, whether we owed anything to England or not, whether we were Imperialists or not, or whether we were French or English? The one simple commending fact to govern our conduct was that Canada was at war, and Canada and Canadian liberties had to be protected.

To you as a "Nationalist" this fact should have appealed more than to any others. Englishmen, as was natural, returned to fight for England, just as Germans and Austrians and Belgians and Italians returned to fight for their native lands.

But we, Canadians, had we no call just as insistent, just as compelling to fight for Canada? Did not the *Leipzig* and the *Gneissau* possibly menace Victoria and Vancouver, and did you not feel the patriotism to make sacrifices for the protection of British Columbia? How could you otherwise call yourself Canadian? It is true that Canada did not hear the roar of German guns nor were we visited at night by the murderous Zeppelins, but every shot that was fired in Belgium or France was aimed as much at the heart of Canada as at the bodies of our brave Allies. Could we then wait within the temporary safety of our distant shores until either the Central Powers flushed with victory should come to settle their account or until by the glorious death of millions of our fellowmen in Europe, Canada should remain in inglorious security and a shameful liberty?

I give thanks that that question has been answered not as you would have had it answered but as those Canadians who have already died or are about to die here in this gallant motherland of France have answered it.

It may have been difficult for you at first to have realised the full significance of the situation. You were steeped in your belief that Canada owed no debt to England, was merely a vassal state and entitled to protection without payment. You were deeply imbued with the principle that we should not partake in a war in the declaration of which we had had no say. You believed very sincerely that Canadian soldiers should not be called upon to fight beyond the frontier of Canada itself, and your vision was further obscured by your indignation at the apparent injustice to a French minority in Ontario.

It is conceivable that at first on account of this long held attitude of mind and because it seemed that Canadian aid was hardly necessary, for even we feared that the war would be over before the first Canadian regiment should land in France, you should have failed to adapt your mind to the new situation and should for a while have continued in your former views;—but now — now that Canada has pledged herself body and soul to the successful prosecution of this war—now that we knew that only by the exercise of our full and united strength can we achieve a speedy and lasting victory — now that thousands of your fellow citi-

zens have died, and alas! many more must yet be killed — how in the name of all that you may hold most sacred can you still maintain your opposition? How can you refrain from using all your influence and your personal magnetism and eloquence to swell the great army of Canada and make it as representative of all classes of our citizens as possible?

Could you have been here yourself to witness in its horrible detail the cruelty of war — to have seen your comrades suddenly struck down in death and lie mangled at your side, even you could not have failed to wish to visit punishment upon those responsible. You too would now wish to see every ounce of our united strength instantly and relentlessly directed to that end. Afterwards, when that end has been accomplished, then and then only can there be honour or profit in the discussion of our domestic or imperial disputes.

And so my first reason for your support would be that you should assist in the defence of Canadian territory and Canadian liberties.

And my second would be this :—

Whatever criticisms may to-day be properly directed against the Constitutional structure of the British Empire, we are compelled to admit that the *spiritual* union of the self governing portions of the Empire is a most necessary and desirable thing. Surely you will concede that the degree of civilisation which they represent and the standards of individual and national liberty for which they stand are the highest and noblest to which the human race has yet attained and jealously to be protected against destruction by less developed powers. All may not be perfection — grave and serious faults no doubt exist — vast progress must still be made — nevertheless that which has been achieved is good and must not be allowed to disappear. The bonds which unite us for certain great purposes and which have proved so powerful in this common struggle must not be loosened. They may indeed be readjusted, but the great communities which the British Empire has joined together must not be broken asunder. If I thought that the development of a national spirit in Canada meant antagonism to the “spirit” which unites the Empire to-day, I would utterly repudiate the idea of a Canadian nation and would gladly accept the most exacting of imperial organic unions.

Hitherto I have welcomed your nationalism because I thought it would only mean that you wished Canada to assume national responsibilities as well as to enjoy its privileges.

But your attitude in the present crisis will alienate and antagonise the support which you might otherwise have received. Can you not realise that if any worthy nationality is possible for Canada it must be sympathetic to and must co-operate with the fine spirit of imperial unity? That spirit was endangered by the outbreak of European war. It could only be preserved by loyal assistance from all those in whom that spirit dwelt.

And so I would also have had you support Canadian participation in the war, *not* in order to maintain a certain political organism of Empire,

but to preserve and perpetuate that invaluable *spirit* which alone makes our union possible.

The third reason is this: You and I are so called French-Canadians. We belong to a race that began the conquest of this country long before the days of Wolfe. That race was in its turn conquered, but their personal liberties were not restricted. They were in fact increased. Ultimately as a minority in a great English speaking community we have preserved our racial identity, and we have had freedom to speak or to worship as we wished. I may not be, like yourself, "un pur sang", for I am by birth even more English than French, but I am proud of my French ancestors, I love the French language, and I am as determined as you are that we shall have full liberty to remain French as long as we like. But if we are to preserve this liberty we must recognise that we do not belong entirely to ourselves, but to a mixed population, we must rather seek to find points of contact and of common interest than points of friction and separation. We must make concessions and certain sacrifices of our distinct individuality if we mean to live on amicable terms with our fellow citizens or if we are to expect them to make similar concessions to us. There, in this moment of crisis, was the greatest opportunity which could ever have presented itself for us to show unity of purpose and to prove to our English fellow citizens that, whatever our respective histories may have been, we were actuated by a common love for our country and a mutual wish that in the future we should unite our distinctive talents and energies to create a proud and happy nation.

That was an opportunity which you, my cousin, have failed to grasp, and unfortunately, despite the heroic and able manner in which French Canadian battalions have distinguished themselves here, and despite the whole-hearted support which so many leaders of French Canadian thought have given to the cause, yet the fact remains that the French in Canada have not responded in the same proportion as have other Canadian citizens, and the unhappy impression has been created that French Canadians are not bearing their full share in this great Canadian enterprise. For this fact and this impression you will be held largely responsible. Do you fully realise what such a responsibility will mean, not so much to you personally — for that I believe you would care little — but to the principles which you have advocated, and for many of which I have but the deepest regard. You will have brought them into a disrepute from which they may never recover. Already you have made the fine term of "Nationalist" to stink in the nostrils of our English fellow citizens. Have you caused them to respect your national views? Have you won their admiration or led them to consider with esteem and toleration your ambitions for the French language? Have you shown yourself worthy of concessions or consideration?

After this war what influence will you enjoy — what good to your country will you be able to accomplish? Wherever you go you will stir up strife and enmity — you will bring disfavour and dishonour upon our

race, so that whoever bears a French name in Canada will be an object of suspicion and possibly of hatred.

And so, in the third place, for the honour of French Canada and for the unity of our country, I would have had you favourable to our cause.

I have only two more reasons, and they but need to be mentioned, I think, to be appreciated.

Here in this little French town I hear all about me the language I love so well and which recalls so vividly my happy childhood days in Montebello. I see types and faces that are like old friends. I see farm houses like those at home. I notice that our French Canadian soldiers have easy friendships wherever they go.

Can you make me believe that there must not always be a bond of blood relationship between the Old France and the New?

And France — more glorious than in all her history — is now in agony straining fearlessly and proudly in a struggle for life or death.

For Old France and French civilisation I would have had your support.

And in the last place, all other considerations aside and even supposing Canada had been a neutral country, I would have had you decide that she should enter the struggle for no other reason than that it is a fight for the freedom of the world — a fight in the result of which like every other country she is herself vitally interested. I will not further speak of the causes of this war, but I should like to think that even if Canada had been an independent and neutral nation she of her own accord would have chosen to follow the same path of glory that she is following to-day.

Perhaps, my cousin, I have been overlong and tedious with my reasons, but I shall be shorter with my warning — and in closing I wish to say this to you.

Those of us in this great army, who may be so fortunate as to return to our Canada, will have faced the grimest and sincerest issues of life and death — we will have experienced the unhappy strength of brute force — we will have seen our loved comrades die in blood and suffering. Beware lest we return with revengeful feelings, for I say to you that for those who, while we fought and suffered here, remained in safety and comfort in Canada and failed to give us encouragement and support, as well as for those who grew fat with the wealth dishonourably gained by political graft and by dishonest business methods at our expense — we shall demand a heavy day of reckoning. We shall inflict upon them the punishment they deserve — not by physical violence — for we shall have had enough of that — nor by unconstitutional or illegal means — for we are fighting to protect not to destroy justice and freedom — but by the invincible power of our moral influence.

Can you ask us then for sympathy or concession? Will any listen when you speak of pride and patriotism? I think not.

Remember too that if Canada has become a nation respected and self-respecting, she owes it to her citizens who have fought and died in this

distant land and not to those self-styled Nationalists who have remained at home.

Can I hope that anything I have said here may influence you to consider the situation in a different light and that it is not yet too late for me to be made proud of our relationship?

At this moment, as I write, French and English-Canadians are fighting and dying side by side. Is their sacrifice to go for nothing or will it not cement a foundation for a true Canadian nation, a Canadian nation independent in thought, independent in action, independent even in its political organisation — but in spirit united for high international and humane purposes to the two Motherlands of England and France?

I think that is an ideal in which we shall all equally share. Can we not all play an equal part in its realisation?

I am, as long as may be possible,

Your affectionate Cousin,

TALBOT M. PAPINEAU.

III

Mr. Bourassa's Reply to Capt. Talbot Papineau's Letter

Montreal, August 2nd, 1916.

Andrew R. McMaster, Esq., K.C.,
189 St. James St.,
City.

Dear Sir,

On my return from an absence of several weeks, I found your letter of the 18th ult., and the copy of a letter apparently written to me by your partner, Capt. Talbot Papineau, on the 21st of March.

Capt. Papineau's letter, I am informed, appeared simultaneously, Friday last, in a number of papers, in Montreal, Quebec, Ottawa and elsewhere. You have thus turned it into a kind of political manifesto and constituted yourself its publisher. Allow me therefore to send you my reply, requesting you to have it transmitted to Capt. Papineau, granting that he is the real author of that document. I can hardly believe it. A brave and active officer as he is has seldom the time to prepare and write such long pieces of political eloquence. Then, why should Capt. Papineau, who writes and speaks French elegantly, who claims so highly his French origin and professes with such ardour his love of France, have written in English to his "*dear cousin Henri*" ? How is it that a letter written on the 21st of March has reached me but four months later, through your medium? For what purpose did you keep it so long in portfolio? and why do you send me a copy, instead of the letter itself?

It is, you say, an "open letter". It was, nevertheless, meant to reach me. It opens and ends with forms of language bearing the touch of intimate relationship — more so even than could be expected from the rare intercourse which, in spite of our blood connection, had so far existed between your partner and myself. The whole thing has the appearance of a political manoeuvre executed under the name of a young and gallant officer, who has the advantage or inconvenience of being my cousin. That Capt. Papineau has put his signature at the foot of that document, it is possible; but he would certainly not have written it in cool thought, after due reflexion. It not only expresses opinions radically opposed to those I heard from him before the war; it also contains inaccuracies of fact of which I believe him honourably incapable.

He mentions "some discussions in the past", "differences of opinion", which have left "uninjured" a "pleasant friendship", dating, he

says, "from the time of [his] birth." From his childhood to his return from Oxford, I do not think we had ever met, and certainly never to exchange the slightest glimpse of thought or opinion. Of matters of national concern we talked but once in all my life. From that one conversation I gathered the impression that he was still more opposed than myself to any kind of imperial solidarity. He even seemed much disposed to hasten the day of the Independence of Canada. Since, I met him on two or three occasions. We talked of matters indifferent, totally foreign to the numerous questions treated with such eloquent profuseness and so little reasoning in his letter of the 21st of March.

How can he charge me with having expressed "unhappy views" "at the outstart of the war", in August 1914, and held them stubbornly "unchanged" till this day? In August 1914, I was abroad. My first pronouncement on the intervention of Canada in the war is dated September 8th, 1914. In that editorial, while repelling the principles of Imperial solidarity and their consequences, and maintaining the nationalist doctrine in which Capt. Papineau — and you as well — pretends to be still a believer, I pronounced myself in favour of the intervention of Canada, *as a nation*, for the defence of the superior interests uniting Canada with France and Britain. My "unhappy views" were thus analogous to those of your partner. It is but later, long after Capt. Papineau was gone, that my attitude was changed and brought me to condemn the participation of Canada in the war, — or rather the political inspiration of that participation and the many abuses which have resulted therefrom. The reasons of that change are well known to those who have read or heard with attention and good faith all my statements on the matter. To sum them up is now sufficient.

The free and independent participation of Canada — free for the nation and free for the individuals — I had accepted, provided it remained within reasonable bounds, in conformity with the conditions of the country. But the Government, the whole of Parliament, the press and politicians of both parties all applied themselves systematically to obliterate the free character of Canada's intervention. "Free" enlistment is now carried on by means of blackmailing, intimidation and threats of all sorts. Advantage has been taken of the emotion caused by the war to assert, with the utmost intensity and intolerance, the doctrine of Imperial solidarity, triumphantly opposed in the past by our statesmen and the whole Canadian people, up to the days of the infamous South African War, concocted by Chamberlain, Rhodes and the British imperialists with the clear object of drawing the self-governing colonies into "the vortex of European militarism". That phrase of your political leader, Sir Wilfrid Laurier, is undoubtedly fresh in your mind. After having given way to the imperialistic current of 1899, Sir Wilfrid Laurier and the liberal party had come back to the nationalist doctrine. The naval scare of 1909 threw them again under the yoke of imperialism; the war has achieved their enslavement: they united with the tory-jingo-imperialists of all

shades to make of the participation of Canada in the war an immense political manoeuvre and thus assure the triumph of British imperialism. You and your partner, like many others, have followed your party through its various evolutions. I have remained firmly attached to the principles I laid down at the time of the South African war and maintained unswervingly ever since.

As early as the month of March 1900, I pointed out the possibility of a conflict between Gréat Britain and Germany and the danger of laying down in South Africa a precedent, the fatal consequence of which would be to draw Canada in all the wars undertaken by the United Kingdom. Sir Wilfrid Laurier and the liberal leaders laughed at my apprehensions; against my warnings they quoted the childish safeguard of the "no precedent clause" inserted in the Order in Council of the 14th of October 1899. For many years after, till 1912, and 1913, they kept singing the praises of the Kaiser and extolling the peaceful virtues of Germany. They now try to regain time by denouncing vociferously the "barbarity" of the "Huns". To-day, as in 1900, in 1911, and always, I believe that all the nations of Europe are the victims of their own mistakes, of the complacent servility with which they submitted to the dominance of all Imperialists and traders in human flesh, who, in England as in Germany, in France as in Russia, have brought the peoples to slaughter in order to increase their reappings of cursed gold. German Imperialism and British Imperialism, French Militarism and Russian Tsarism, I hate with equal detestation; and I believe as firmly today as in 1899 that Canada, a nation of America, has a nobler mission to fulfil than to bind herself to the fate of the nations of Europe or to any spoliating Empire — whether it be the spoliators of Belgium, Alsace or Poland, or those of Ireland or the Transvaal, of Greece or the Balkans.

Politicians of both parties, your liberal friends as well as their conservative opponents, feign to be much scandalised at my "treasonable disloyalty". I could well afford to look upon them as a pack of knaves and hypocrites. In 1896, your liberal leaders and friends stumped the whole province of Quebec with the cry "WHY SHOULD WE FIGHT FOR ENGLAND?" From 1902 to 1911, Sir Wilfrid Laurier was acclaimed by them as the indomitable champion of Canada's autonomy against British Imperialism. His resisting attitude at the Imperial Conferences of 1902 and 1907 was praised to the skies. His famous phrase on the "vortex of European militarism", and his determination to keep Canada far from it, became the party's by-word — always in the Province of Quebec, of course. His Canadian Navy scheme was presented as a step towards the independence of Canada.

Then came the turn of the Conservatives to tread in the footsteps of the Nationalists; they soon outstripped us. A future member of the conservative Cabinet, Mr. Blondin, brought back to life an old saying of Sir Adolphe Chapleau, and suggested to pierce the Union Jack with bullets in order to let pass the breeze of liberty. The tory leaders, Sir Robert

Borden, Sir George Foster, the virtuous Bob Rogers, and even our national superKitchener, Sir Sam Hughes, while trumpeting the purity of their Imperialism, greeted with undisguised joy the anti-imperialist victory of Drummond-Arthabaska, and used it for all it was worth to win the general elections of 1911.

By what right should those people hold me as a "traitor", because I remain consequent with the principles that I have never ceased to uphold and which both parties have exploited alternately, as long as it suited their purpose and kept them in power or brought them to office?

Let it not be pretended that those principles are out of place, pending the war. To prevent Canada from participating in the war, then foreseen and predicted, was their very object and *raison d'être*. To throw them aside and deny them when the time of test came, would have required a lack of courage and sincerity, of which I feel totally incapable. If this is what they mean by "British loyalty" and "superior civilisation", they had better hang me at once. I will never obey such dictates and will ever hold in deepest contempt the acrobats who lend themselves to all currents of blind popular passion in order to serve their personal or political ends.

This, let it be well understood, does not apply to your partner. His deeds have shown the sincerity of his political turn. Without agreeing with his new opinions, I admired his silent courage in running to the front at the first call. His verbose political manifesto — supposing he is really responsible for it — adds nothing to his merits. Still less does it enhance the dignity and moral worth of the politicians and pressmen of all kinds, who, after having denounced war and imperialism, and while taking great care not to risk their precious body, have become the apostles of war and the upholders of imperialism.

I will not undertake to answer every point of the dithyrambic plea of my gallant cousin. When he says that I am too far away from the trenches to judge of the real meaning of this war, he may be right. On the other hand, his long and diffuse piece of eloquence proves that the excitement of warfare and the distance from home have obliterated in his mind the fundamental realities of his native country. I content myself with touching upon one point, on which he unhappily lends credit to the most mischievous of the many antinational opinions circulated by the jingo press. He takes the French-Canadians to task and challenges their patriotism, because they enlist in lesser number than the other elements of the population of Canada. Much could be said upon that. It is sufficient to signalise one patent fact : the number of recruits for the European war, in the various Provinces of Canada and from each component element of the population, is in inverse ratio of the enrootment in the soil and the traditional patriotism arising therefrom. The newcomers from the British Isles have enlisted in much larger proportion than English-speaking Canadians born in this country, while these have enlisted more than the French-Canadians. The Western Provinces have given more recruits than Ontario, and Ontario more than Quebec. In

each Province, the floating population of the cities, the students, the labourers and clerks, either unemployed or threatened with dismissal, have supplied more soldiers than the farmers. Does it mean that the city dwellers are more patriotic than the country people? or that the newcomers from England are better Canadians than their fellow-citizens of British origin, born in Canada? No; it simply means that in Canada, as in every other country, at all times, the citizens of the oldest origin are the least disposed to be stampeded into distant ventures of no direct concern to their native land. It proves also that military service is more repugnant to the rural than the urban populations.

There is among the French-Canadians a larger proportion of farmers, fathers of large families, than among any other ethnical element in Canada. Above all, the French-Canadians are the only group exclusively Canadian, in its whole and by each of the individuals of which it is composed. They look upon the perturbations of Europe, even those of England or France, as foreign events. Their sympathies naturally go to France against Germany; but they do not think they have an obligation to fight for France, no more than the French of Europe would hold themselves bound to fight for Canada against the United States or Japan, or even against Germany, in case Germany should attack Canada without threatening France.

English Canada, not counting the *blokes*, contains a considerable proportion of people still in the first period of national incubation. Under the sway of imperialism, a fair number have not yet decided whether their allegiance is to Canada or to the Empire, whether the United Kingdom or the Canadian Confederacy is their country.

As to the newcomers from the United Kingdom, they are not Canadian in any sense. England or Scotland is their sole fatherland. They have enlisted for the European war as naturally as Canadians, either French or English, would take arms to defend Canada against an aggression on the American continent.

Thus it is rigorously correct to say that recruiting has gone in inverse ratio of the development of Canadian patriotism. If English-speaking Canadians have a right to blame the French-Canadians for the small number of their recruits, the newcomers from the United Kingdom, who have supplied a much larger proportion of recruits than any other element of the population, would be equally justified in branding the Anglo-Canadians with disloyalty and treason. Enlistment for the European war is supposed to be absolutely free and voluntary. This has been stated right and left from beginning to end. If that statement is honest and sincere, all provocations from one part of the population against the other, and exclusive attacks against the French-Canadians, should cease. Instead of reviling unjustly one-third of the Canadian people — a population so remarkably characterised by its constant loyalty to national institutions and its respect for public order, — those men who claim a right to enlighten and lead public opinion should have enough good faith

and intelligence to see facts as they are and to respect the motives of those who persist in their determination to remain more Canadian than English or French.

In short, English-speaking Canadians enlist in much smaller number than the newcomers from England, because they are more Canadian; French-Canadians enlist less than English-Canadians because they are totally and exclusively Canadian. To claim that their abstention is due to the "baneful" influence of the Nationalists is a pure nonsense. Should I give way to the suggestion of my gallant cousin, I would be just as powerless as Sir Wilfrid Laurier to induce the French-Canadians to enlist. This is implicitly acknowledged in Capt. Papineau's letter: on the one hand, he asserts that my views on the participation of Canada in the war is denied by my own friends; on the other he charges the mass of the French-Canadian population with a refusal to answer the call of duty. The simple truth is, that the abstention of the French-Canadians is no more the result of the present attitude of the Nationalists than the consequence of the liberal campaign of 1896, or of the conservative appeals of 1911. It relates to deeper causes: hereditary instincts, social and economic conditions, a national tradition of three centuries. It is equally true, however, that those deep and far distant causes have been strengthened by the constant teaching of all our political and social leaders, from Lafontaine, Cartier, Macdonald, Mackenzie, to Laurier inclusively. The only virtue, or crime, of the Nationalists is to persist in believing and practising what they were taught by the men of the past, and even those of to-day. This is precisely what infuriates the politicians, either *blue* or *red*. To please the Imperialists, they have renounced all their traditions and undertaken to bring the French-Canadians under imperial command. Unable to succeed, they try to conceal their fruitless apostasy by denouncing to the hatred of the jingos the obtrusive witnesses of their past professions of faith.

The jingo press and politicians have also undertaken to persuade their gullible followers that the Nationalists hinder the work of recruiters *because* of the persecution meted out to the French minorities in Ontario and Manitoba. This is but another nonsense. My excellent cousin, I am sorry to say, — or his inspirer — has picked it up.

The two questions are essentially distinct, this we have never ceased to assert. One is purely internal; the other affects the international status of Canada and her relations with Great Britain. To the problem of the teaching of languages we ask for a solution in conformity with the spirit of the Federal agreement, the best interests of Confederation, and the principles of pedagogy as applied in civilised countries. Our attitude on the participation of Canada in the war is inspired exclusively by the constant tradition of the country and the agreements concluded half a century ago between Canada and Great Britain. Even if the irritating bilingual question was non-existent, our views on the war would be what they are. The most that can be said is, that the backward and essentially Prussian policy of the rulers of Ontario and Manitoba gives us an addi-

tional argument against the intervention of Canada in the European conflict. To speak of fighting for the preservation of French civilisation in Europe while endeavouring to destroy it in America, appears to us as an absurd piece of inconsistency. To preach Holy War for the liberties of the peoples overseas, and to oppress the national minorities in Canada, is, in our opinion, nothing but odious hypocrisy.

Is it necessary to add that, in spite of his name, Capt. Papineau is utterly unqualified to judge of the feelings of the French-Canadians? For most part American, he has inherited, with a few drops of French blood, the most *denationalised* instincts of his French origin. From those he calls his compatriots he is separated by his religious belief and his maternal language. Of their traditions, he knows but what he has read in a few books. He was brought up far away from close contact with French-Canadians. His higher studies he pursued in England. His elements of French culture he acquired in France. The complexity of his origin and the diversity of his training would be sufficient to explain his mental hesitations and the contradictions which appear in his letter. Under the sway of his American origin, he glories in the Revolution of 1776; he calls it a war "for the principle of national existence". In good logic, he should approve highly of the tentative rebellion of the Sinn Feiners, and suggest that Canada should raise in arms to break the yoke of Great Britain. His American forefathers, whom he admires so much, fought against England and called upon France and Spain to help them against their mother-country, for lighter motives than those of the Dublin rebels. The Imperial burden they refused to bear was infinitely less ponderous than that which weighs today upon the people of Canada.

With the threat contained in the conclusion of his letter, I need not be concerned. Supposing always that he is truly responsible for that document, I make broad allowance for the excitement and perturbation resulting from his strenuous life. He and many of his comrades will have enough to do in order to help Canada to counteract the disastrous consequences of the war venture in which she has thrown herself headlong. To propagate systematically national discord by quarreling with all Canadians, either French or English, who hold different views as to the theory and practice of their national duty, would be a misuse of time. Moreover, it would be a singular denial of their professions of faith in favour of liberty and civilisation.

As to the scoundrels and bloodsuckers "who have grown fat with the wealth dishonourably gained" in war contracts, I give them up quite willingly to their just indignation. But those worthies are not to be found in nationalist ranks: they are all recruited among the noisiest preachers of the Holy War waged for "civilisation" against "barbarity", for the "protection of small nations", for the "honour" of England and the "salvation" of France.

Yours truly,

Henri BOURASSA.

P. S. — I hope this will reach you before you leave for the front: no doubt, you have been the first to respond to the pressing call of your partner.

H. B.

Mr. McMaster's Reply

Montreal, Aug. 8th. 1916.

Monsieur Henri Bourassa,

Montreal.

Dear Sir,

I duly received your letter of the 2nd. of August, on my return to my office, on Saturday morning, the 5th. instant, after a brief absence of two days.

I would not have thought it necessary to intervene in the slightest degree in the discussion between yourself and my partner, Captain Papi-neau, were it not that your letter contains a considerable number of bitter remarks which are evidently directed at me.

As my attitude to you has never been other than courteous, I am driven to the conclusion that these remarks must be caused by a mis-apprehension and that you are labouring under the idea that this letter which my partner, Captain Talbot Papineau, wrote you was written, or at least inspired, by me. Allow me to assure you most emphatically that such is not the case, and that the idea of writing to you and the letter itself are the work of my partner.

Captain Talbot Papineau is as incapable of putting his name to another's composition as I believe myself incapable of dealing a political stroke under the cloak of another's name or from a point of vantage of relationship not my own.

That I have striven since boyhood, and never more earnestly than during these last two years, to do my humble part to draw together the different racial and religious elements which form our population cannot altogether be unknown to you, who at least on one occasion had the opportunity of witnessing my sincerity.

I will not return bitterness for bitterness for such cannot advance what should be the earnest desire of all patriotic hearts — that at this, above all other times, kindly thoughts and kindly words and kindly deeds should unite all those who call Canada their common country.

I am,

Yours very truly,

A. R. McMASTER.



